

## The Song of the Leaves.

HAVE you ever caught the secret  
Which the leaves forever sing  
Through each balmy day of summer,  
While the birds are on the wing?  
Have you listened to their music  
And their laughter soft and sweet?  
Have you watched their shining glances  
Through the noon-day's glowing heat?

Oh, they make such merry music,  
Gaily dancing in the breeze!  
Every tiny leaf a-tumble  
On the solemn old oak trees.  
That you know some happy secret  
Must have stirred each winsome elf  
To those bursts of fairy laughter,  
And you fairly laugh yourself.

Up and down they dance and quiver,  
Back and forth they swing in glee,  
While the whistling winds still louder  
Pipe their merry minstrelsy.  
All along the woodland borders  
Past the reapers and their sheaves,  
Still the rippling music greets you  
Of the laughter of the leaves.

—The Parody.

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## Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Rev. W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, AUGUST 6, 1892.

REV. E. A. STAFFORD ON THE  
DRINK TRAFFIC.

THE late Rev. E. A. Stafford, a few years ago, preached a series of sermons on "Civic Responsibilities," at the Metropolitan Church. He took for his text Romans 19: 22: "Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth."

This was true of every individual and equally true of any class of society working together for common interests. Take it of the city and its liquor licenses. Was the licensing the sale of intoxicating drinks a doubtful thing—a thing which the best sense of the community condemned? He thought it was. This drink wastes great resources without any good. Five years ago it was at its climax in Canada. Then it took 2,225,000 bushels of grain. That represents the food of a vast multitude. It was computed by a present Minister of the Crown that in 1883 it cost Canada \$30,750,000. That was ten millions more than Canada paid for bread, and nearly as much more than its meat cost. In fact, our nation gives for this drink money enough to provide clothing, except boots and hats, for all its people, and half enough to provide food for the same great company. Since Confederation we have paid enough to pay our present national debt more than three times. Add to this waste the loss of industry and life through drink. A careful compiler says a half million drunkards in Canada every year. Say the number is 2,000. An old saying states that the average loss in a drunkard's life is

twenty-four years. Suppose I say ten years. That, with 2,000 drunkards dying every year, makes a loss equal to the labour of 20,000 for a year, which, at \$300 each per annum, would be \$6,000,000 through the drink. What do we get in return for this? Why, a portion of the people can vindicate their liberty to drink. They run the terrible risk of becoming drunkards. Ontario has about a million people under license and a million under prohibition, and the first million committed 5,983 more crimes than the last million.

## WHAT SAVED HIS HAND?

THE time may come to us when the question of life or death will depend on our sobriety and general healthfulness. There are many palsy, potty, robust-looking men, so full of disease that the pick of a pin may kill them, and there are other men so clean and healthful, that you might almost run them through a threshing machine, and the fragments when put together would knit and heal.

A young labouring man was brought to a certain hospital with a badly lacerated hand. It had fallen upon an old cotton-hook, and it had gone entirely through the palm of his hand, carrying with it rust and dirt. The wound was kept open so it would suppurate freely, and he readily cleansed. As time passed on, the hand became very much swollen, turned black, and the surgeons watched carefully for signs of blood-poisoning, fearing that the entire hand would have to be amputated to save the life of its possessor. These signs not appearing, it then became a question whether more of the hand could be saved than the thumb and first two fingers. As the hand became no worse, the surgeon delayed operating on it, and after a time it began to mend, and finally healed entirely, equally to the surprise and delight of the surgeon.

"Young man," said he to the patient, as the danger was passing away, "do you use alcohol in any form?"

"No, sir."

"Do you use tobacco?"

"No, sir."

With a wave of his hand, a nod of his head, the surgeon murmured:

"That is what saved your hand."

Tissues degenerated by stimulants cannot resist the attack of accident and disease as can tissues that are formed only of wholesome and nutritious food.

## A MAN WHO LIVED IN A BOX.

BY SOPHIE S. SMITH.

MOTHER—What was the subject for your Mission Band to-day?

Hetty—India; and Miss Hope told us a funny story about a priest who lived in a box.

Mother—That was a strange place to live. What did he do there?

Hetty—Well, he wanted to get rid of sin and find God, and he first went to live in a dry well, where he stayed twenty years.

Mother—How did he get food?

Hetty—The people brought him bread and water.

Mother—Did he get any better?

Hetty—No, the load of sin was as heavy as ever, and he could find no peace.

Mother—He did not seek it in the right way, or he would have found it long before.

Hetty—But he did not give up seeking. He thought if he could float up and down on the river Ganges, he would find God; so he made a box six feet square, put it in a boat, and went to live in the box on the sacred river.

Mother—I suppose he did not find peace there any more than he did in the well.

Hetty—No; he was just as unhappy as ever. But one day a native Christian was passing along the river, and he saw him in the box. He spoke to him, and when he found out why he was there, he took out the box and read to him about Jesus. He promised to ask God to take away his sins for Jesus' sake.

Mother—So he found the true way at last. Did he then leave the box?

Hetty—Not then. Three years after, the same native Christian was passing that way, and there he saw the old priest still

sitting in his box. He asked if he had been helped any by what he had told him. He said he had, but there was no one to teach him, and he could not learn any more. He told him to leave his box and come with him, and he would teach him about Christ.

Mother—Was he willing to leave his box?

Hetty—Oh, yes; he found it did not help him, so he was ready to give it up. His friend took him to the English missionary, who taught him about Jesus, and soon the joy and peace which he had been seeking so long, filled his heart.

Mother—I am sure he did not stop there.

Hetty—No; he took his Bible and went out to teach his people, and when he was a hundred years old he was still preaching.

Mother—Christ says, "Seek and ye shall find;" but many poor heathen may be groping about in the dark unable to find because they do not know how to seek. They need some one to teach them how to find Jesus, and the peace and joy which he gives.

Hetty—Don't the missionaries teach them?

Mother—There are a great many good men and women who are giving their whole time to teaching them, but there are not near enough to teach the millions of heathen who know nothing about Christ, and can never know unless they are taught.

SOME CURIOUS FACTS ABOUT  
HONEY-BEES.

BY O. W. DEMAREZ.

I HAVE seen a single bee cling to a smoothly-dressed board with its front feet, and supporting a living chain of twenty-five bees, thus supporting twenty-five times her own weight, for an indefinite time. There was a time when I was puzzled to know how the bee could hold on to the smooth board and sustain such a weight. But the magnifying glass reveals a finely curved claw at the extremity of each of the front pair of legs, and these enable the bee to cling to the wood in any position. But how does the bee manage to run up a pane of glass or a facet of polished metal? Her sharp claws will not serve her in this case. Well, nature has provided for that in a wonderful way. I once had a theory to account for this wonderful feat. But when I commenced to study the anatomy of the bee under the magnifying glass my theory was found to be wide of the mark. The glass shows an infinitesimal gland in the soles of the feet, which secretes a mucilaginous substance of sufficient tenacity to enable the bee to cling to the smoothest surface that it is likely to come in contact with.

The mandibles (jaws) of the honey-bee, when seen under the glass, are a real curiosity. They not only open and shut, like the jaws of any other animal, but they have a backward and forward movement, and each of the pair is independent of the other in its movements. The old class of naturalists believed that the honey-bee, as an artist and a builder, was a "mason." But this has been found to be a mistake. The honey-bee is a "smith." She draws out her work, using her mandibles in the place of the smith's hammer. It would be a simple impossibility to build a wall as thin as that of the honey comb, by any other process. Bees-wax is the result of digested honey, just as tallow results from the digestion of the food of the ox. But the bees-wax, instead of adhering to the flesh, as in the case of fat animals, passes out of the body of the bee, through one of the six false pockets on the under side of the abdomen, in the form of thin scales or pellets, and while they are warm and pliable the bees seize them with their mandibles and weld them to the rims of the cells, and continue to draw out the combs until the proper depth of the cells is reached. The cell walls are as thin as the finest tissue paper known to the art of paper-making, and would not have sufficient strength to support the tiny weight of a tiny bee were they not strengthened by an exquisitely formed rim around them, supporting their frail walls below, precisely as does the wired rim round the top of a tin vessel. That these thin walls are drawn out and not built on to, is proved by the fact that the rim round the cell is as well defined when the work is first begun as it is when the comb is finished, and is present through the whole process of construction.

## WHAT ONE WOMAN DID.

SEVEN years ago, Miss Beilby, a young English woman who had studied medicine to fit herself for usefulness as a missionary at Lucknow, India, was sent for by the wife of the native prince of Punnah, who was ill. Punnah was a long distance from Lucknow, and the journey was a dangerous one. If Miss Beilby went she would be separated by more than a hundred miles from any white man.

Her friends urged her to refuse. The English woman was young and timid; but she knew her duty. She went, remained two months and cured the patient. When she was about to return the rance sent for her, and begged her to go in person to Queen Victoria, with the message that Indian women not being allowed the attendance of men physicians, die in great numbers every year for want of care. The rance brought paper, pen, and ink, and with tears besought Miss Beilby to write her petition to the queen to send them women doctors.

"Write it small, Sahiba," she begged; "for I shall put it in a locket and hang it about your neck; and you must wear it until you put it into the hands of the great rance herself."

Miss Beilby returned to England the next year, obtained an interview with Queen Victoria, and placed the locket with the message in her hands. The Queen was deeply touched, and empowered Lady Dufferin, the wife of the Viceroy of India, to form an association for sending out female medical aid to the women of India.

Many women doctors have been sent out by the association; and Indian women are now being educated as physicians and nurses. An estate of fifty acres, with large buildings, has been given by a native prince as a hospital for Hindoo female patients.

Had the timid missionary refused to undertake the perilous duty to one woman, these great blessings—which are but the beginning of help and hope for the women of India—probably never would have come to them. Sow the seed, however small it may be; of good deeds. Only God knows what the fruit may be.

## BOOKS MADE OF CLAY.

FAR away beyond the plains of Mesopotamia, on the banks of the river Tigris, lie the ruins of the ancient city of Nineveh. Not long since huge mounds of earth and stone marked the place where the palaces and walls of the proud capital of the great Assyrian empire stood. The spade, first of the Frenchman, then of the Englishman, has cleared all the earth away and laid bare all the remains of the old streets and palaces where the princes of Assyria walked and lived. The gods they worshipped and the books they read have all been revealed to the sight of a wondering world. The most curious of all the curious things preserved in this wonderful manner are the clay books of Nineveh.

The chief library of Nineveh was contained in the palace of Konyunjik. The clay books which it contains are composed of sets of tablets covered with very small writing. The tablets are oblong in shape, and when several of them are used for one book the first line of the tablet following was written at the end of the one preceding it. The writing on the tablets was of cuneiform, done when the clay was soft, and then it was baked to harden it. Then each tablet or book was numbered, and assigned to a place in the library with a corresponding number, so that the librarians could readily find it, just as our librarians of to-day number the books we read.

Among these books are to be found collections of hymns (to the gods), descriptions of animals and birds, stones and vegetables, as well as history, travels, etc. Perhaps those little Ninevite children of long ago took the same delight that the young folk of to-day do in stories of the birds, beasts, and insects of Assyria.

The Assyrians and Babylonians were great students of astronomy. The method of telling time by the sun, and of marking it by the instrument called a sundial, was invented by the latter nation. None of our modern clocks and watches can be compared to the sundial for accuracy. Indeed we have to regulate our modern inventions by the old Babylonian one.